

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (OMHSP)  
Partnership Summary – February 2020**

***Informal Partners (no MOA/MOU)***

**Federal Sector:**

CDC  
Department of Labor  
National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention  
Mil/Vet Task Force  
National Institute of Mental Health  
Secretary's Center for Strategic Partnerships

**Higher Education Sector:**

University of Colorado, Marcus Institute  
for Brain Health

**Nonprofit Sector:**

American Association of Suicidology  
Entertainment Industries Council  
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)  
The Jed Foundation  
The Mission Continues  
The Trevor Project

**Veteran/Military Service Organizations:**

Blind Veterans of America  
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)  
HomeBase  
Military Officers Association of America  
(MOAA)  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Student Veterans of America (SVA)  
Team Red, White, and Blue (GWB Alliance)  
Team Rubicon  
The American Legion  
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)  
Vietnam Veterans of America

***Partnership Overview***

The Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention's Suicide Prevention Program (OMHSP SPP) currently partners with nearly **60** organizations, formally and informally, working in suicide prevention, intervention, and/or postvention.

***Informal Partners***

Informal partners (**23**) do not have a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Suicide Prevention Program. These partnerships focus primarily on resource sharing and community outreach.

***Resources***

Partnerships are a critical piece of VA's approach, as partners enable VA to expand its reach and deliver care and support to Veterans where they live, work, and thrive. OMHSP offers partners all types of support, including:

- Expert technical assistance and education
- Data and research reports
- Communications and outreach materials
- Tools and resources

SPP shares these resources with partners in various ways, such as quarterly newsletters, monthly bulletins, and webinars.

***Highlighted Informal Partnership:***

***Entertainment Industries Council***

VA has provided feedback and support for the Entertainment Industries Council's upcoming guide for industry professionals on responsible depiction of suicide, addiction, and trauma in entertainment. VA provides their subject matter expertise on how these issues impact Veterans.

***Leveraging VA*** program offices across the VA enterprise is critical to ensuring a comprehensive approach to partnerships and public health. VA offices collaborate on holistic, inclusive, and flexible suicide prevention initiatives for our Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors.

For example, SPP connects with the *VA Center of Excellence for Suicide Prevention* and *VA Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention* to learn about evidence-based research and best-practice interventions, which informs our resource creation, messaging, and partner outreach.

## **Formal Partners (MoA/MoU written agreement)**

### **Federal Sector:**

Corporation for National Community Service  
Department of Defense  
Department of Homeland Security  
Law Enforcement Training Center  
SAMHSA  
US DHHS Indian Health Service

### **Healthcare Sector:**

Post Acute Recovery LLC/VFR

### **Higher Education Sector:**

University of Michigan Regents

### **Nonprofit Sector:**

American Cancer Society  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Red Cross  
America's Warrior Partnership  
Boulder Crest Retreat  
Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation  
CaringBridge.org  
Code of Support Foundation  
Cohen Veterans Network  
Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Caregiver Office  
George W Bush Institute/Warrior Wellness Alliance  
Independence Fund  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
Objective Zero Foundation  
Project Hero  
Psych Armor Institute  
Semper Fi Fund  
TAPS  
VetTix

### **Private Sector:**

Johnson & Johnson  
Public Service Announcement Advertising  
RallyPoint  
USAAEF  
Walgreens

### **Veteran/Military Service Organizations:**

American Legion Auxiliary  
American Veterans (AMVETS)  
Enlisted Association of the National Guard  
Wounded Warrior Project/Warrior Care Network

## **Formal Partners**

Formal partners (36) have a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). Some of these partnerships are managed through OMHSP, while others are leveraged through other VA program offices.

### ***Highlighted Formal Partnership: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)***

VA and SAMHSA launched the **Mayor's Challenge** to prevent Veteran suicide by establishing local strategic action plans. To start, teams in eight cities established diverse local coalitions, using a public health approach. One year after launch, the program expanded to 24 sites.

In 2019, the **Governor's Challenge** started, bringing the community-level model of the Mayor's Challenge to the state-level. Both programs are still expanding with the goal to start Challenges in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

## **Partnership Gap Analysis**

Within the 14 partnership sectors, SPP is working to expand partnerships with faith-based organizations, institutions of higher learning, workplaces, chambers of commerce, and legal support service providers.

## **Strategy**

OMHSP is establishing and expanding partner relationships based on their connectivity with at-risk or increased-risk Veteran populations.

- **Access to Lethal Means:** Partnerships with NSSF & AFSP to reach firearm owners with safe storage education.
- **Technology:** Partnerships with CaringBridge, Objective Zero and RallyPoint to promote social connectedness among Veterans and their families and provide them with lifesaving resources through online platforms and mobile applications.

## **Partnerships: Moving Forward**

SPP plans to strengthen current partnerships and explore new ones within sectors outlined in the *National Strategy*. Most current partners fall within the VSO, nonprofit, and federal sectors. SPP will pursue new groups that expand outreach to vulnerable populations, including women Veterans, service members transitioning out of active duty, rural Veterans, and Veterans with access to lethal means, like firearms.